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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

FOR MAYYA TOKMAN (OES/PCI)

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [BD](#)
SUBJECT: COLLABORATION FOR BASIC SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
EDUCATION

REF: STATE 23320

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The BDG is overhauling its public education system with the help of international partners. Post has supplemented these activities by focusing on USAID-funded pre-school education programs that include math and science elements. The Public Affairs section has also been involved in an effort to train madrasa school teachers. Building on these activities with a math and science focus, or providing supplemental materials for other internationally-sponsored programs, would give any collaboration the most added value. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) The state of the Bangladesh education system is abysmal. The BDG is working with the ADB, WB, DFID, SIDA, JIPA, and others to improve the quality of education at the primary and secondary school level. The partnership is formalized as the Second Primary Education Development Program (PEDP II), and has an annual budget of several hundred million dollars to overhaul the country's education system. Additional donors could be accepted to the consortium, and there is an opportunity to build on an existing, government-accepted educational activity.

¶3. (SBU) USAID Dhaka has had a budget between \$3-5 million for education in recent years focused on pre-school education, which is not covered by the PEDP II initiative. The SUCCESS program and the Sesame-Street production of "Sisimpur" have targeted the youngest audiences with basic alphabet, numeric, science, and other concepts. Possibilities exist to focus more on the math and science efforts of these programs.

¶4. (SBU) PA has developed a relationship with the Madrasa Board's teacher training institute to provide exchanges and expertise to teachers of madrasa schools. Building on this relationship could have a direct impact in math and science for Islamic educators and education. Possible programs range from supplementary teaching or classroom materials to full collaborations with U.S. institutions and resources.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: In light of the large size of the PEDP II, it would take a major financial commitment to give a new USG initiative sufficient scope to be effective and recognized.
CHAMMAS